

BARBER COUNTY INDEX.

E. P. CARUTHERS & W. G. MUGROVE,
EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25, 1888.

MATHIAS SANDORF.

BY JULES VERNE.

AUTHOR OF "JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH," "TRIP TO THE MOON," "AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHTY DAYS," ETC.

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CHAPTER VII.

THE TRIAL.

It is a fact, which became part of Austrian history in connection with the year of 1848, is a triangular peninsula of which the isthmus forms the base. This peninsula extends from the Gulf of Trieste to the Gulf of Quarnero; and along the coast line are several harbors. Among others, almost at the extreme southern point, is Pola, which the Government was then forming into a dockyard and arsenal of the first rank.

The province more especially on the western coast, is still Italian, and even Venetian in its customs and language. The Slav element, still struggling with the Italian element, and the German element has some difficulty in maintaining its influence.

There are several important towns on the coast and in the interior. Among these are Capo d'Istria and Pleso, whose population is almost entirely employed in the sea works at the mouth of the Risan and Corna Lunga; Parenzo, the headquarters of the Italian fleet and the residence of the Bishop; Rivigno, rich in its olive trees, and Pola, where tourists find interest in the superb monuments of Roman origin, and which is destined to become the most important military port in the Adriatic.

But neither of these towns have the right to call itself the capital of Istria. The place that bears that title is Pola, situated almost in the center of the triangle, and thither, unknown to them, the prisoners were about to be taken after their arrest.

At seven o'clock the chase stopped to change horses. It was only at a farm, where the horses were waiting ready to be harnessed. It was not a post-station. The escort resumed its journey. The carriage passed along a road among the vineyards where the vines had just begun to bud. The road was flat and the carriage made rapid progress. The darkness now grew more profound, for heavy clouds, brought up by a violent storm, were now close over the sky; and although the windows were let down from time to time to admit a little fresh air—for the night was warm in Istria—it was impossible to distinguish anything even close at hand. Although Sandorf and his friends noted every incident on the road, the direction of the wind and the time elapsed since their departure, they could not discover the direction in which the carriage was traveling. The object was doubtless to keep it as secret as possible, so that their place of confinement should not be known to the public.

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Pleso is the chief place of the district, and contains about 24,000 inhabitants. It is situated almost in the center of the peninsula, and particularly at fair time a large business is done among the mixed population of Morlacques, Slavians of different tribes, and even Talmians, who flourish there.

The capital of Istria is an old city, and has retained its feudal character. The strikingly appears in the ancient castle, which towers above several more modern military establishments where the administration of the government is carried on.

It was in the courtyard of this castle that the post-chaise stopped on the 9th of June, about ten o'clock in the morning, after a journey of twenty-four hours. Count Sandorf, his two companions and Sarany left the vehicle, and a few minutes afterwards were shown into separate vaulted cells.

Although they had had no communication with each other, and had not been able to exchange ideas in any way, yet Sandorf, Zathmar and Bathory were all engaged in pondering over the same subject. How had the secret of the plot been discovered? Had the police come on the track by chance? There had recently been no correspondence between Trieste and the Hungarian and Transylvanian towns. Was there a traitor in the camp? But who could be

the traitor? Conscience and reason played in none. There were no papers to fall into a spy's hands. All the documents had been destroyed. Had they rummaged the most secret corners of the Aqueduct they would not have found a single suspicious note! And that is what had happened. The police had discovered nothing—except the grating, which Zathmar had not destroyed. But unhappily the grating was serious evidence, for it was impossible to explain its use except as a means of ciphered correspondence.

In fact, everything rested on the copy of the message that Sarany, with Toronthal's connivance, had handed over to the Governor of Trieste after having made out its real meaning. But, unfortunately, that was quite enough to make good the accusation of conspiring against the state; and it has been decided to bring Count Sandorf and his friends before a special tribunal, a military tribunal, which would proceed in military fashion.